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Abstract

The author begins this paper with, "Let us recognize as axiomatic the statement that sentences in natural languages have the properties of structured, organic wholes." She feels that this statement has several important theoretical consequences, the most interesting (in so far as the current controversy over "surfacism" is concerned) being pattern-meaning. It follows as a corollary of her opening statement that syntactic patterns have a meaning of their own, a meaning that is conditioned by, but not reducible to, the features of intercategorial relationships of the parts. The simplex "The thought frightened John" and its causative paraphrase "The thought made John frightened" are both simple in their deep structure because in each of the sentences each of the categorial relationships occurs just once. (See AL 002 096.) These two sentences differ in configuration properties, or pattern-meaning. The author explains the differences in pattern-meaning and discusses the effects of verbal clitics on pattern-meaning in Spanish. She feels that there is "no choice but to accept the fact that patterns have meanings, and the patterns with their inseparable meanings do fulfill communicative purposes." (DO)

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PATTERN - MEANING

IN

SYNTACTIC STRUCTURES

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Let us recognize now as axiomatic the statement that sentences in natural languages have the properties of structured, organic wholes. This statement has several important theoretical consequences. The most interesting of these consequences, in so far as the current controversy over 'surfacism' is concerned, is pattern-meaning. It follows as a corollary of our most general statement above that syntactic patterns have a meaning of their own, a meaning that is conditioned by, but not reducible to, the features or intercategorial relationships of the parts. It is the nature of pattern-meaning that will be the concern of today's discussion.

I begin by restating for you the similarities between the simplex The thought frightened John and its causative paraphrase, The thought made John frightened. As I demonstrated in my 'Paraphrastic Causatives' paper last December, the case grammar interpretation of this pair of alternants is that they are simple in their deep structure. The justification for this interpretation is that in each of the sentences, each of the categorial relationships occurs just once. The noun thought bears the same Instrumental relationship to make frightened in the causative paraphrase that it bears to frighten in the simple alternant. And the noun John bears the same Locative relationship to frighten in the simple alternant that it bears to make frightened in the causative paraphrase. Exactly the same set of relational statements establishes the deep structural simplicity of John trembled with fear and its causative paraphrase, Fear made John tremble; and exactly the same statements allow me to explain in simple

and quite direct ways my conviction that it is just not so that the stative passive sentence The letter is written is imbedded in John has the letter written; and that what is so is that the only in-depth difference between the two sentences is that the former does not, and the latter does, have an Agent. It is furthermore so that their status as stative-resultative passives is a function of their alternant relationship to the present perfect sentence, John has written the letter. And from this there follow certain consequences for the interpretation of The thought made John frightened. The first of these is that resultative, or stative, or statal, passives, as they have variously been called, distinguish themselves sharply from other passive constructions and so-called stative adjective constructions in that when the auxiliary is in the present tense, the tense reference of the stative passive participle is present perfect. And when the auxiliary is in the past tense, the participle is in the past perfect. The letter is written, then, is in effect paraphrasable as The letter is in a state of having been written.

Now, having described the ways in which The thought frightened John and The thought made John frightened are similar, we must ask how they differ. The answer is that they differ in configuration properties--that is, they differ in pattern-meaning. We begin our pattern explorations with what we'll call the 'Actor-Action-Goal-Transitive.' Goal-transitives are characterized by an active subject -- that is, an Agentive

or Instrumental subject -- by the active subject's activity; and by the affective connection of the subject's activity with the goal or object. Thus the subject affects the object or does something to the object. If the subject is an Agent, the sentence may also contain an appropriate Instrumental phrase.

Regardless of whether the subject is an Agent or an Instrument, the goal-transitive pattern predicates activity only of the subject. In the sentence John opened the door, John himself, with his hand on the knob, and/or his key or lock-picker in the lock, carries out the activity of opening. He has contact with the door throughout the activity.

There is more to be said about the goal-transitive pattern. What this more-to-be-said concerns, is what the sentences The thought frightened John and John opened the door do not tell us -- their silences, if you will -- because what they do not say is as much a part of their meaning as what they do say. For example, what the sentence John opened the door neither tells nor implies to us is that the door opened, or was open, or that the Verb open, qua member of the Agentive goal-transitive pattern, has an inchoative, or a causative, or a stative component. All the goal-transitive sentence tells us about is the subject's activity, not the object's.

It is a fact, and certainly not a surprising one, that the syntax of motion reflects physical reality; or rather, it reflects our perceptual-motor responses to reality, which, as it turns out, are generally quite objective. I have been convinced for a long and very lonely time that if one

penetrates far enough into the intricacies of motion patterns, which include metaphorically and universally temporal, Factitive, and change-of-state patterns -- which include, that is, most patterns --one can't help coming to the conclusion that syntactic structures are not logical, they are teleological; they are not logical, they are physiological; they are not logical, they are biological.[1] And accordingly, I am taking the position here that the semantic features assignable to a Verb in any one of its occurrences must be limited to those that are relevant to its function in the pattern selected.

[1] In my paper on Syntactic Dissimilation, currently undergoing final revision, I demonstrate the 'motion characteristics' of numerous cognate object-verbs. Of particular interest is the behavior of the verbs of the senses, which participate paradigmatically in motion sentences in which the subject is the goal of motion: I smell (the smell of)honey . Here the surface object, honey, is a Source adverb in the deep structure, reflecting the fact that we perceive the smell of something as something that emanates from the object.

Edward Keenan, in his lucid paper on presuppositions at the Columbus semantics festival last April, defined logical presuppositions as relations between deep structures and the world, and pragmatic presuppositions as relations between utterances and their contexts. His distinction was based, I presume, on the assumption that only deep structures are relevant to semantic interpretation. But since, in fact, surface structures do have meanings of their own, I believe we must ask whether it might not well be the case that only pragmatic presuppositions are relevant to the explanation of how we become speaker-hearers of language. I am taking the pragmatic position here, with the qualification that logical presuppositions, when they are relevant to the meaning of a sentence, are also

pragmatic presuppositions. I realize I'm putting myself out on an unnecessary limb, since I'm protected by the case framework, but let me illustrate my position anyway with John opened the door.

The Verb open in John opened the door identifies the action as a whole -- an aspectually undifferentiated whole. That the activity was perfected is signaled by the past tense morpheme. But the fact that the motion has to be begun before it can be ended is not part of the meaning of the sentence. And only those aspects of the reality of motion that are communicated by the sentence are relevant to its interpretation. Motion can be perceived as a whole, or as beginning, or continuing, or ending; and we have patterns for communicating these various ways in which motion can be perceived. For example, for motion beginning we have John began to open the door.

The next point to be belabored is that the Agentive subject-relationship exists in contrast with the causal Instrument relationship. We must distinguish between the sense in which an Agent does something himself and the sense in which the Instrument causes something to happen. In short, the subject of 'cause to be' or 'cause to abstractly be' is always an Instrument.

Well, then, what about the sentence The door opened? Again the transitive sentence doesn't tell us about the door's motion, but about the subject's motion. Furthermore, The door

opened is not implied at all by the Agentive transitive sentence, but by the paraphrastic causative sentence, Something caused the door to open, as we will see momentarily. The only sentence implied by John opened the door is the passive, The door was opened by John.....what I'm arguing at this point, of course, is that for one sentence to be implied by another, it must exist as an alternant of that sentence -- not necessarily as a grammatical sentence, but at least as a natural one.

Next: if there were a stative proposition implicit in John opened the door, it could only be a resultative-stative passive. First of all, to assume a simple stative as somehow underlying activity, whether transitive or mediopassive, belies the sententially communicated fact that an opened door and a frightened John presuppose a having been opened door and a having been frightened John. The work is done now and John has the work done now presuppose that John has done the work, not that the work was done before John did it. Only John has opened the door and The door has opened/ been opened imply The door is open now. Furthermore, the simple stativity of a Verb such as lie in The Mediterranean lies between Europe and Africa can hardly be said to underlie the active behavior of lay and its alternant, lie. It must be recognized, once and for all, that the statement that lay derives from lie is strictly a morphological one--and a syntactically irrelevant one. What is syntactically relevant about the lay/lie relationship is that the two forms occur in alternation, the form lay being determined by the selection of an Agent and a goal-transitive object; and the form lie determined by the selection of an intransitive pattern. With these Verbs

as with essentially all lexical forms, the lexical shape is determined by function in the pattern.

Now I'd like to turn our attention to the meaning of mediopassive intransitives and their in-depth inseparability from Instrumental phrases. Keeping in mind the tremble/make tremble alternation illustrated under A in the handout, let's examine the sentences in part C. The sentence Glass breaks easily tells us that there is something about the nature of glass that determines the truth of the predicate, that determines the principle defined by Aristotle 'whereby only what is burnable will burn and only what will yield in a certain way can be broken.' The implication of Glass breaks easily is a function of its co-occurrence potential in Glass breaks easily because of its fragility and The fragility of glass makes it break easily --or, makes it easy to break,... Notice that the mediopassive subject is a constituent also in the Instrument phrase. Such a sentence as This glass breaks easily because John should have bought a better one is not only nonsense, it is totally unrelated to Glass breaks easily-presuppositions. Notice also that the Agentive sentence, One can break glass easily , where easily modifies the subject's activity, is not an alternant of the mediopassive intransitive sentence, where easily modifies only the mediopassive subject. Notice yet again that Mary woke John unwillingly is unrelated to John woke unwillingly, but John's tendency to withdraw caused him to wake unwillingly is related to John woke unwillingly and is a normal sentence, at least linguistically speaking. What all of these observations add up to is that

the relationship of door to open in The door opened is not the relationship that exists in John opened the door. The mediopassive intransitive, and the translative passive exemplified by John gets frightened at the thought (an alternant of The thought makes John frightened) are alternants of paraphrastic causatives.

So now we are obliged to ask as always what is the difference in meaning between mediopassive sentences and their causative paraphrases. Paraphrastic causatives differ from their transitive or mediopassive intransitive alternants, first, in the way the subject is related to the activity. In the causative, the Instrumental subject triggers the verbal activity, but does not perfect it. The purpose, the reason for selecting the causative alternant is to make overt both the active relationship of the Instrument to the activity, and the involvement of the object in the activity. That is to say, to make overt the fact that the activity affecting the object does not cease with the cessation of the subject's activity. This involvement is signaled by the positioning of the object between the causative auxiliary and the main Verb; that is, by placing it in logical subject position, where the Verb phrase predicates something of the object as well as the subject. Thus the paraphrastic causative is a more dynamic construction than the goal-transitive; but more dynamic still is the mediopassive intransitive. Because what we are doing

with the mediopassive construction is to predicate activity -- which is always, at least metaphorically, motion--of a participant perceived as incapable of producing, or simply not having produced by itself the activity identified by the Verb. In the passive, The door was opened, we are not predicating activity of the door, but of the in-this-instance-unnamed Agent. The door opened tells us about the door's activity, not about the Agent's. And it is crucial to note that the potential co-occurrence of mediopassive intransitives with Instrument phrases, but not with Agentives, is what conditions the meaning of the pattern. Thus, the difference in apprehension of the pattern properties of sentences and those of paintings, say, stems from the fact that sentences are organic wholes. And our apprehension of pattern-meaning is dependent, not only on grasping the significance of the integration, but on grasping what is not -- but could be -- there, which in the case of the mediopassive is the parenthesized 'presence' --the potential for hook-up -- with Instrumental phrases, but not Agentives. If neither an Instrument nor an Agent is perceived as involved in the opening of a door, we have yet another pattern in which to cast the Verb; namely, the simplex, The door came open.

Is this activity pure and simple? I think a brief consideration of the effects of verbal clitics on pattern-meaning in Spanish will help answer this question and reveal to us an integrated concept of intransitive meaning.

Please look at the sentences under D and accept for the moment my claim that the verbal clitics in Spanish are not pronouns -- a claim I have demonstrated in two of the papers listed in my references -- accept my claim that the clitics are pronominal concord elements of the Verb, just as the o of canto 'I sing' is a concord element; and we can explain some of the apparent mysteries of their behavior.

Note that 1.a. under D, ¿La conoces a María? implies 1.b., Sí, nos conocemos; but sentence 2., Conozco a María, y sé que ella no haría eso, does not tell us that Mary knows me. Notice that in 3., Le rogamos al farmacéutico, que como un favor especial, nos de la medicina de fiado, the le tells us that we are counting on an affirmative response from the pharmacist; while the same sentence without the clitic does not tell us that. The function of these by-no-means-always-optional clitics is analogous to that of positioning in ... the English paraphrastic causative -- that is, what English does positionally in make John frightened, Spanish can do by making the Verb agree in person, case, and/or grammatical gender, with the object. This concord registration on the Verb marks the object(s) as participants in the sentence event, just as verbal concord marks the subject as a participant in the activity identified by the Verb. Whether or not literal reciprocity is implied as in 1. b., depends on the meaning of the Verb and the underlyirg case categories of the participants.

Spanish also has a set of clitics for marking analogous involvement relationships between the subject -- or topic -- and the Verb. These are the so-called reflexive object pronouns, which are neither reflexive, nor objects, nor pronouns. Looking at the examples under 4., we note a three-way pattern contrast. 4.a., Olvidé hacerlo, can be used to belie the meaning of forget. Here the infinitival complement is in object function, which tells us "I the subject am connected by forgetting with this object." Though the sentence does not tell us whether the forgetting is deliberate -- Agentive subject -- or non-deliberate,--Locative subject -- this is the pattern I use to communicate my responsibility for forgetting. This may just be the way I am; I forget things. In 4.b., Se me olvidó hacerlo, which is generally and accurately translated as 'It slipped my mind to do it,' I'm telling you it isn't my fault, and that I am the Source from which the activity departed (taking Source here as a separate Locative category). I am telling you that something --circumstances -- caused what happened to me. (Compare with English 'Mommy, my dolly broke.' In 4.c., on the other hand, we note that the infinitive is not the object, but a prepositional phrase, that the Verb, as in the preceding example, is intransitive, and that the intransitive use requires se-concord with the subject. Here I am, by means of accidence, verbal concord elements, prepositions, -- function morphemes -- disconnecting myself from the thing forgotten and focusing on my forgetting, apart from the thing

forgotten.

Much the same comments apply to the sentences under 5, with the exception that in Mo perdí el libro, I am the Source from which the book departed --the one from whom it is missing. It wasn't anyone else's fault; it wasn't deliberate; but how could I have done such a thing? Again the focus is on the subject's experiencing, as conditioned by its underlying categorial --Source -- relationship to the Verb.

All se- sentences are intransitive. Yet se, like the middle desinence in Greek, attaches to Verbs in several. apparently unrelated constructions. Looking at the examples under E, where --with one exception -- both the Spanish and the English sentences are intransitive, we note that 1. is an intransitivized reflexive. Sentence two has an implicit reciprocal object; Sentence three is passive; and four is a mediopassive intransitive --which brings me to the big question, a question we are absolutely obliged to ask: what do reflexive, reciprocal, Agentive intransitive, passive, and mediopassive intransitive have in common that allows for their being undifferentiated in so far as verbal accidence is concerned; and which allows for the sometimes massive intran-- sitivization of reflexive and reciprocal object- sentences? The answer is that the subject in the intransitive pattern is inactively related to the Verb. Even with Agentive Verbs of mo tion with underlying reflexive objects, it is the case, as Aristotle says, that 'whenever anything is self-moving, we must distinguish between the aspect wherein it produces the motion and the aspect wherein it receives it.' And so,

since it is a sententially communicated fact that no Agent can move through space without moving himself, Spanish economically and obligatorily gets rid of reflexive objects for all animate Verbs of motion.[2] The picture in English is somewhat different. There are numerous Verbs -- *set out* and *start off* among them -- that are diachronically intransitivized reflexive-object-Verbs.[3] And there are many others like *turn around* and *dress*, which appear in goal-transitive patterns with reflexive objects, and in intransitive patterns when the focus is on the activity with no reference to an object.

There arises at this point the question of how to

[2] E. Adelaide Hahn has claimed in several places that in Greek the same Verb may be found now in the active with a reflexive pronoun as object, now in the middle with no object, with no difference in meaning. Obviously there is a difference in meaning; that is, in pattern-meaning. The middle-intransitive sentence focuses on the subject's activity or experiencing (if animate), while the transitive sentence with reflexive object focuses on the affective, goal-transitive connection of Agent with object.

[3] See Curme's chapter on Voice (*Syntax*) for a discussion of the 'drift' from reflexive or reciprocal object-Verbs into intransitives. He points out that this 'drift' is so old that it was going on already in Old English. He points out also that transitive-causative Verbs like *lay* and *set*; that is, those transitive Verbs that are morphologically derived from intransitive forms such as *lie* and *sit*, existed in alternation with their intransitive 'bases' in oldest English. It is thus inaccurate to say, as some people have said, that *lay* is historically derived from *lie*.

Curme, more than any other traditional grammarian, recognizes and dwells on the intimate relationship of reflexive to intransitive, reciprocal, and passive, noting that the drift to intransitive-cum-passive-meaning reflects the fact that it is often almost impossible to distinguish reflexive or intransitive meaning from passive meaning.

formalize the salient features of intransitive meaning. Several approaches suggest themselves, but a consideration of them would make this paper unallowably long. However, no matter how we approach the explanation of pattern-meaning, we have no choice but to accept the fact that patterns do have meanings, and that patterns with their inseparable meanings fulfill communicative purposes. Furthermore, since for the Spanish patterns discussed here, not to mention the English structures, the selection of one or another pattern is a function of --is conditioned by -- underlying, integrated conceptual relationships of the subject to the Verb and the other participants, we must accept the fact that these relationships, which I am here calling categorial, lie rather deep in the deep structures of natural languages.[4]

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[4]In addition to pattern-meaning, we must recognize two other consequences of the axiom that syntactic structures have the properties of structured, organic, wholes. The first of these is pattern fulfillment --the tendency to self-fulfillment in structured wholes that allows small gaps to be ignored or simply not noticed. The second consequence is that of membership character--the principle that states, as I have stated and illustrated in several places, that the elements of a pattern, through a dynamic participation, alter their formal individuality in becoming constituents of the whole.

PATTERN-MEANING IN SYNTACTIC STRUCTURES

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A. Summary of Derivations provided in Paraphrastic Causatives (See December, 1968 Meeting Handbook).

1. Fear made John tremble

	M	V	L	I
a.	past	tremble	inside John	with fear

b. with fear past tremble inside John
c. fear past tremble inside John
d. fear past + make tremble inside John
e. fear past + make tremble John
f. fear made tremble John
g. fear made John tremble

2. John trembled with fear

a. past tremble inside John with fear
b. inside John past tremble with fear
c. John past tremble with fear
d. John trembled with fear

B. Actor-Action-Goal-Transitive Pattern: X does something to Y (by means of Z).

1. John opened the door

	M	V	O	A
a.	past	open	of the door	by John

b. by John past open of the door
c. John past open of the door
d. John past open the door
e. John opened the door

C. Mediopassive intransitives as alternants of paraphrastic Causatives: Activity pure and simple?

1. Glass breaks easily
Glass breaks easily because of its fragility
The fragility of glass makes it break easily

2. The roof collapsed under the impact of the tree.
The impact of the tree caused (made) the roof (to) collapse.

D. The effects of verbal clitics on Pattern-meaning in Spanish.

1. a. ¿La conoces a María? Have you met Mary?
b. Sí, nos conocemos. Yes, we have met.
2. Conozco a María, y sé que ella no haría eso. 'I know Mary, and I know she wouldn't do that.'

3. (Le) rogamos al farmacéutico, que como un favor especial, nos dé la medicina de fiado. 'We will beg the pharmacist to give us the medicine on credit as a special favor.'

4. a. Olvidé hacerlo.'I forgot to do it'
   b. (A mí)se me olvidó hacerlo 'It was forgotten from me to do it.'
   c. Me olvidé de hacerlo 'I forgot about doing it.'

5. Perdí el libro. 'I lost the book.'
   Se me perdió el libro
   Me perdí el libro.

E. Further observations on intransitivity

1. Juan se sentó en un banco'John sat down on a bench.'
2. Sí, nos conocemos 'Yes, we've met.'
3. Este libro se caracteriza por un estilo casi machadiano 'This book is characterized by an almost Machado-like style.'
4. Se abrió la puerta 'The door opened.'

F. References

1. Babcock (1968). Paraphrastic Causatives (mimeographed).

2. _____ (1968b) Verbal Clitics and Object Pronouns in Spanish (mimeographed).

3. _____ (1969) The Syntax of Spanish Reflexive Verbs: The parameters of the Middle Voice (forthcoming from Mouton).